

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 891

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2361

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, PINT, JO

SUBJECT: ISRAELI VIEW OF RECENT WEST BANK EVENTS

REF: (A) JERUSALEM 427, (B) TEL AVIV 2199

1. DCM AND EMBOFF DISCUSSED RECENT WEST BANK
DISTURBANCES AND EXPULSION OF WEST BANK POLITICIANS
WITH COL. DAVID FARHI, POLITICAL ADVISOR TO GEN. ORLY,
IDF COORDINATOR OF ACTIVITIES IN THE ADMINISTERED AREAS.

2. FARHI DESCRIBED DISTURBANCES AS RESULTING FROM
CLEVER MANIPULATION BY PALESTINIAN NATIONAL FRONT
(PNF) OF COURT RULING RE JEWISH PRAYERS ON TEMPLE MOUNT. HE
UNDERScoreD EMOTIONAL AND UNIFYING ASPECT OF TEMPLE
MOUNT QUESTION AMONG WEST BANK ARABS, BUT SAID THAT
FACT THAT NO ISRAELI MINISTER PUBLICLY CRITICIZED
THE MAGISTRATE'S RULING ON JANUARY 28 UNTIL ONE WEEK LATER
FACILITATED PNF EFFORT TO EXPLOIT ISSUE. FARHI ADDED
THAT CONTRIBUTING FACTOR WAS GOVERNMENT DECISION
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TO EXPROPRIATE ARAB LAND IN GALILEE IN ISRAEL
PROPER, HE SAW A DEFINITE RELATIONSHIP

BETWEEN RAKAH REACTION TO EXPROPRIATION
(REFTEL B) AND PNF ACTIVITIES ON WEST BANK, ALTHOUGH
HE HAD NO FIRM EVIDENCE OF COORDINATION.

3. FARHI SAID HE EXPECTS WEST BANK TO REMAIN RELATIVELY
QUIET FOR SOME PERIOD BARRING UNFORESEEN EVENTS.
HE POINTED OUT THAT EVEN DURING DISTURBANCES
60,000 WEST BANKERS OR NEARLY ALL WHO HELD JOBS IN ISRAEL,
CONTINUED TO REPORT FOR WORK. HE ALSO CITED
FACT THAT 176 CANDIDATES HAD FILED FOR
APRIL 12 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ON FIRST OF THREE-DAY
FILING PERIOD AS EVIDENCE THAT WEST BANKERS DESIRE
ELECTIONS TO PROCEED AS PLANNED. ASKED IF HE THOUGHT
ELECTIONS WOULD IN FACT BE HELD, FARHI WAS LESS
DEFINITE THEN OTHER ISRAELI OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN IN PUBLIC,
SAYING THEY WOULD BE HELD "IF ALL GOES WELL" BETWEEN
NOW AND APRIL 12.

4. FARHI ADMITTED THAT THE TIMING AND CIRCUMSTANCES
OF THE EXPULSION OF TWO WEST BANK LEFTIST POLITICIANS
ON MARCH 27 WERE UNFORTUNATE. HE INSISTED THAT THE
EVIDENCE JUSTIFYING EXPLUSION MUST HAVE BEEN SUFFICI-
ENTLY CONVINCING OR ELSE A MAN OF THE STATURE OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL BARAK WOULD NOT HAVE ALLOWED IT.
AS FOR THE CHARGE THAT THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT WAS
ATTEMPTING TO INTERFERE WITH THE ELECTIONS, FARHI
COUNTED THAT IF THAT WERE THE CASE THE GOVERNMENT
WOULD HAVE EXPELLED FAHD KHAWASMEH FROM HEBRON, WHO
IS AMUCH STRONGER CANDIDATE AGAINST MAYOR JA'BARI THAN
IS DR. HATSHI WHO WAS EXPELLED. LATTER HOWEVER,
ACCORDING TO FARHI, IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE
PALESTINE NATIONAL FRONT ANMD WAS ENGAGED IN CREATING
AN ATMOSPHERE OF INTIMIDATION AIMED MORE MODERATE
CANDIDATES.

5. COMMENT: FARHI RETURNED TO THE IDF IN JANUARY
AFTER THREE YEARS' ABSENCE. IN PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS
HE HAD PLACED MORE EMPHASIS ON ANDHAD SHOWN MORE
UNDERSTADING AND SYMPATHY FOR THE GRIEVANCES OF WEST
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BANK ARABS AND ON THE NEED OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT
TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THEM. HIS FOCUS ON THIS OCCASION
ON THE MANIPULATIVE ROLE OF EXTREMIST ELEMENTS MAY
REFLECT A DESIRE TO STAY WITHIN MINISTERIAL GUIDELINES
ON A SENSITIVE ISSUE.
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